

Background on current food system on campus:

While students have been advocating for lower prices for the past 5 years (through the senate, first-year councils, community sessions at Board of Governors meetings, negotiations with SHHS, sit-ins), there have been multiple waves of student frustration with unaffordable food on campus. When McGill first began to corporatize their food services with Chartwell Corporation in 2002, a Coalition for Action on Food Services was formed by students, faculty and staff to advocate for community-led management of food services. Prior to the exclusive contract, many of the food options on campus were run by individual faculties and had student autonomy over pricing, food options, and accessibility of the items. Food systems were run by and for the community. Numerous roundtable discussions, an SSMU referendum which passed, and petitions were organized. However, the administration only ended up consulting with 1 student representative from the coalition. In the end, McGill signed with Chartwell Corporations, leading to the disappearance of student-run cafes as contracts were much more difficult to sign. Prices have drastically increased since the privatization of the services. Since then, multiple waves of students have pushed for lower prices: the [McGill Food Coalition](#) formed in 2019-2022 to reduce profit-driven food structures. Here were their [objectives](#):

[McGill Food Coalition](#) (2017-2021) objectives:

Our Mission:

- Ensure food accessibility and inclusion for all students while remaining critical of varying accessibility needs
- Act as a liaison between the many existing working food groups by pooling resources and information
- Support any student-run food-related initiatives by facilitating access to resources and volunteers
- Democratize the food system in order to minimize private corporate gain and maximize student wellness

Our Objectives:

- Collaborate with existing working food groups for maximum synergy

- Increase the presence of nutritious, accessible food at the university level
- Promote food-related projects actively underway on campus as well as in the greater Montreal community
- Attract students for educational and practical events centered around food, from production to preparation
- Research and survey the university population to create a holistic image of the McGill food landscape and ensure student issues are correctly identified and addressed
- Campaign against the monopoly of McGill's current for-profit catering agency, Dana Hospitality

Let's Eat McGill Demands:

Demands:

- 1.** Cafeterias must have affordable food. Meal plans and individual food items should be reasonably priced - at least equal in cost to or cheaper than grocery store prices for individual food items (no markup) or equivalent meals. We have substantial data to suggest that McGill's dining options experience significant markups compared to alternative options, and we believe this price gouging of students is deeply unethical. Many other universities, such as UBC, support their students by subsidizing meal plans, actively supporting food-related student groups, and addressing food insecurity as an issue on campus. Food at McGill has become unacceptably expensive, catching the media's attention due to alarming prices, and this narrative has to change immediately.
- 2.** Proper kitchens and fridges in the residence. All the downtown campus residences do not have enough and/or sufficiently large kitchens to allow students to cook their own meals and have more agency over the food they consume. In addition, the mini-fridges are not large enough to store food for cooking and thus, larger communal fridges are needed.
- 3.** More opportunities for student-run options on campus. A current framework should exist for student groups to start the implementation of these options that eases the process of signing contracts and getting spaces allocated for these services.

4. We want *proper* student consultation. This should not just focus on students in residence or residence council. Instead, it should constitute a comprehensive outreach plan, implement discussion groups, and allow students to assist in drafting surveys and educational material. Furthermore, SHHS representatives should attend student-run assemblies on food insecurity so that they might see the scope of the problem from our perspective.

5. Increase transparency of collected data related to dining options on campus. Release satisfaction surveys from 2018-2023 of the cafeterias (RVC, BMH, NRH, C4, and the other food providers on campus under SHHS), in addition to the surveys released last year